

Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders

Table of Contents *(scroll or use links below to navigate document)*

What They Do

Tasks

Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

Work Environment

California's Job Outlook and Wages

Trends

Training

Where Do I Find the Job?

Where Can the Job Lead?

Other Sources



View Career Video

What They Do

Nearly all goods sold, from jelly beans to video games, come in packaging designed to provide a flawless product to the consumer. Making sure items are properly packaged is the job of Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders. Packaging readies the product for display, purchase, or shipment and the type of packaging varies by product. Products may be rolled into sheets, bagged, boxed, or wrapped.

Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders use a variety of machines and tools to get the job done: vacuum testing machines, labeling machines, printing machines, hand trucks, pallet jacks, stretch wrap machines, bar code devices, and computers. They keep batch production logs to track products for consumer safety should recall be necessary. They sanitize the packaging area to prevent contamination by one product to another.

Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders work in manufacturing and food processing industries under job titles such as Packaging Operator, Packaging Machine Technician, Packaging Line Operator, Filling Line Operator, Filler Operator, Carton Packaging Machine Operator, and Blister Packaging Machine Operator.

Tasks

- ▶ Stock and sort product for packaging or filling machine operation, and replenish packaging supplies, such as wrapping paper, plastic sheet, boxes, cartons, glue, ink, or labels.
- ▶ Observe machine operations to ensure quality and conformity of filled or packaged products to standards.
- ▶ Adjust machine components and machine tension and pressure according to size or processing angle of product.
- ▶ Tend or operate machine that packages product.
- ▶ Stop or reset machines when malfunctions occur, clear machine jams, and report malfunctions to a supervisor.
- ▶ Secure finished packaged items by hand tying, sewing, gluing, stapling, or attaching fastener.
- ▶ Inspect and remove defective products and packaging material.
- ▶ Remove finished packaged items from machine and separate rejected items.

Detailed descriptions of this occupation may be found in the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) at online.onetcenter.org.

Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders

Important Skills, Knowledge, and Abilities

- ▶ **Production and Processing** — Knowledge of raw materials, production processes, quality control, costs, and other techniques for maximizing the effective manufacture and distribution of goods.
- ▶ **Reading Comprehension** — Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work-related documents.
- ▶ **Quality Control Analysis** — Conducting tests and inspections of products, services, or processes to evaluate quality or performance.
- ▶ **Problem Sensitivity** — The ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
- ▶ **Perceptual Speed** — The ability to quickly and accurately compare similarities and differences among sets of letters, numbers, objects, pictures, or patterns. The things to be compared may be presented at the same time or one after the other. This ability also includes comparing a presented object with a remembered object.
- ▶ **Manual Dexterity** — The ability to quickly move your hand, your hand together with your arm, or your two hands to grasp, manipulate, or assemble objects.
- ▶ **Control Precision** — The ability to quickly and repeatedly adjust the controls of a machine or a vehicle to exact positions.

Work Environment

Modern plants usually provide a climate controlled work environment. Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders stand most of the time. Possible hazards include moving machinery and exposure to pollutants, dust, odors, and loud noise levels. Operators may wear protective or safety equipment such as safety shoes, glasses, gloves, hearing protection, or hard hats. Operators must pay attention to detail and be in frequent communication with other workers about the status of the production line to make adjustments as needed. Many manufacturing plants operate 24/7 and workers can expect to work evenings, nights, or weekends as well as overtime when needed. As workers obtain seniority, they have more choice about shift assignments.

California's Job Outlook and Wages

The California Outlook and Wage table below represents the occupation across all industries.

Standard Occupational Classification	Estimated Number of Workers 2004	Estimated Number of Workers 2014	Average Annual Openings	2006 Wage Range (per hour)
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders				
51-9111	48,800	51,100	1,200	\$8.32 to \$13.93

Wages do not reflect self-employment.

Average annual openings include new jobs plus net replacements.

Source: www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov, Employment Projections by Occupation and OES Employment & Wages by Occupation, Labor Market Information Division, Employment Development Department.

Trends

Manufacturers will purchase more automated packaging equipment. Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders will grow at a slower than average rate compared with other

Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders

California occupations. Future trends include “smart and active” packaging that provides product safety and traceability information.

Training/Requirements/Apprenticeships

Most Operators have a high school diploma or its equivalent. No special education is required for this entry-level job other than the ability to read and communicate effectively in English. Basic math is needed. Some jobs require heavy lifting and accurate color vision.

Recommended High School Course Work

High school students interested in manufacturing careers should take machine shop, mathematics, and computer courses.

Where Do I Find the Job?

Employment Services (temporary help agencies) are the largest employer of Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders. Direct application to employers remains one of the most effective job search methods.

Use the *Search for Employers by Industry* feature on the *Career Center* page at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov to locate employers in your area. Search using keywords from the following manufacturing industry names to get a list of private firms and their addresses:

- ▶ Breweries
- ▶ Dried and Dehydrated Food
- ▶ Employment Placement Agencies
- ▶ Frozen Fruit and Vegetable
- ▶ Frozen Specialty Food
- ▶ Fruit and Vegetable Canning
- ▶ Ice
- ▶ Professional Employer Organizations
- ▶ Soft Drink
- ▶ Specialty Canning
- ▶ Temporary Help Services
- ▶ Wineries

Search these **yellow page** headings for listings of private firms:

- ▶ Bakers, Wholesale
- ▶ Beverages-Soft Drinks, Distributors & Bottlers
- ▶ Employment, Temporary
- ▶ Fruit & Vegetable Growers & Shippers
- ▶ Grocers & Markets, Wholesale
- ▶ Milk & Milk Products
- ▶ Pharmaceutical Products, Wholesale
- ▶ Tortillas

Where Can the Job Lead?

Opportunities for advancement depend on the industry and employer. Workers who demonstrate reliability will be well-positioned for career growth to other machine operator and supervisory positions. Because Packaging and Filling Machine Operator and Tender work is available during all shifts and as temporary work, it is an ideal job for those who want their days free to pursue further education or skill training.

Other Sources of Information

Get Tech
www.gettech.org

